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TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA.

THE MORNING SUN 1907

Published in Tallahassee while the Legislature is in session.

CLAUDE L'ENGLE, Editor.
THE SUN COMPANY, Publisher.

Application made for entry as second-class mail matter in postoffice at Tallahassee, Florida.

JOHN BEARD; A MAN

OF THE PEOPLE.

When John Beard lifted up his voice against the project of Everglades reclamation and worked against the ratification of the amendment to the Constitution providing means to carry on the work, a corporation chuckle rumbled along the line from Pensacola to Key West and back again.

"He is ours," the interests exclaimed.

"Another we have gathered to the fold," they cried in glee.

Their joy was genuine, but its cause was ill-founded.

Those who knew Senator Beard, knew that such belief was imaginary.

From his viewpoint he was for the people then as he had always been.

The odor of tainted money had never been traced to his pockets.

He was honest in his opposition to drainage. He did not believe it good for the people. The subject became a hobby that he loved to ride, and on which he cantered about the floor of the Senate Chamber.

But, as said, he rides an honest steed, no jockeying, no contesting in behalf of the special interests that seek political control of Florida.

This is realized now by those who claimed him. The corporation laughter has changed to a wall of discontent, because John Beard stands today where he has always stood—a defender of what he believes to be for the good of the people.

Sometimes he is mistaken in the legislation he advocates, but it is an honest mistake. It happens because he follows the opinion of his own mind and not the course laid down by corporations or special interests.

If any doubt of his character along this line existed, the scope of several bills he has introduced since the beginning of the Legislative session should have dissipated it.

A man of the people he has been, a man of the people he remains.

ONE OF THE EVILS OF COUNTY SCHOOL BOOK ADOPTION.

The Times-Union seems to be worried over the subject of State school book uniformity. In an editorial headed "The Parent in the School," the Times-Union used the recent Tampa incident, where sectional books were found in use, as an excuse for decrying State uniformity.

The facts in this case were that the principal of the Tampa schools introduced a series of geographies into the Tampa schools that had not even been adopted by the Hillsborough Board of Education. The Tampa News recently discovered that these books were sectional, and for that reason objectionable; yet they had been used in Tampa for a year or two, and apparently nobody had discovered it. The books had never been legally adopted, either.

This shows the lax administration of the County Boards, and further shows that the teachers think themselves too important in many cases to even consult the County Board. It is said that the Hillsborough County Board in making its last adoption invited no publishing house to be present by bid or by sending an agent. Such books as were adopted were adopted by the light of a lantern, without giving notice to any publishers or asking for bids from the twenty-five or thirty independent publishing houses that are doing business in the United States. A majority of the counties in the State of Florida have adopted books for use in the public schools without asking for bids from publishers or having the agents of any publishers present except those of the Book Trust.

The Times-Union doesn't pretend to be worried about the danger of such things as happened in Tampa happening anywhere in the State under a State adoption law. State adoptions require an advertisement of from thirty to sixty days of the time the adoption will take place and the subjects on which books will be adopted. Every publishing house in the United States is made aware of the fact that a State adoption is coming on and all are invited to make bids. When

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1907

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